

The Commoner.

The World's Appeal to Morgan.

Attorney General Griggs has resigned from the Cabinet, and Philander C. Knox has been appointed as his successor. Mr. Knox has been attorney for several corporations, but is particularly conspicuous by reason of the fact that he was attorney for the Carnegie Steel Company. The New York World, in a leading editorial, made a strange appeal, and sent its appeal in a strange direction.

The World actually appealed to J. Pierpont Morgan to reconsider and not to insist upon Mr. Knox becoming Attorney General. Mr. Morgan, who is perhaps the greatest trust magnate in this country, recommended to President McKinley the appointment of Mr. Knox. The World tried to impress upon Mr. Morgan the fact that it is not wise to court public condemnation by going too far. It insisted that this appointment would be harmful to the administration and injurious to the vast business interests which Mr. Morgan controls. The World says:

A parallel case is found in President McKinley's offer of the Attorney-Generalship to Col. John J. McCook, of this city, four years ago, to fill the vacancy caused by Mr. McKenna's promotion to the bench of the Supreme Court. Colonel McCook is a man of the highest personal character, and of much greater eminence in his profession than can be claimed for Philander C. Knox. Yet when his name was mentioned in connection with the Attorney-Generalship, public protest was made solely on the ground of his long and prominent connection with trusts and corporations. It was pointed out that while expert criminal lawyers have often made successful district attorneys, no trust lawyer has ever, in any State or in the National Government—though too often given the chance—proved a resolute prosecutor of these "conspiracies in restraint of trade," which are forbidden by law.

If the consideration which led Colonel McCook to take the high-minded action of declining to embarrass the President or his party were sound in 1897, they are even more imperative now—for we had not then a billion-dollar Steel Trust, and gigantic coal and railroad combinations almost as large, absolutely in the control of one man.

We do not hesitate to put it directly to the common sense and sagacity of Mr. Morgan whether it is wise and whether it is ordinarily prudent, to procure the appointment as attorney-general—the officer charged with the execution of the anti-trust and anti-monopoly laws—of one of the steel corporation's counsel, as directly in his employ as one of his head clerks? Is the interpretation that the people will inevitably give to such a bold and apparently defiant appointment one that Mr. Morgan really wishes to invite? Has this far-sighted master of high finance given up the habit of looking ahead—one year, two years, three years?

If he has not he will take measures—even at the cost of disappointment to himself and embarrassment to the President—to prevent the acceptance of the Attorney-Generalship by one of the Steel Trust's counsel.

Of course Mr. Morgan did not act upon the World's good advice. The trusts have accomplished so much in recent years in a political way that they no longer have any fear as to a judgment day. They have come to believe that the people will submit to any imposition which the trust seeks to put upon them.

It is important to these great combinations

that the attorney general shall be a man wholly in sympathy with the trust idea. Unlike the people, the trusts are not willing to take any chances. They want in office only men on whom they can implicitly rely. They want no attorney general who may be troubled with a thing called conscience, who may be affected by the requirements of the real business interests of the country, or who might take a notion to enforce the anti-trust law.

Mr. Philander C. Knox was recommended by Mr. Morgan because he is just the man Mr. Morgan wanted in the position of attorney general.

The World made an eloquent appeal, but it fell upon deaf ears.

Two Incidents.

In Santiago Bay Admiral Sampson was nominally in command, but the battle that resulted in victory for the Americans was commanded by Admiral Schley. Because Sampson was nominally in command, it was held by the administration with which he is a prime favorite that Sampson was entitled to all the honors of the great victory, and to all the material favors resulting therefrom.

General McArthur is in command in the Philippines, and when Funston went out to capture Aguinaldo he was under McArthur's orders. Strange to say, however, Funston is actually given the credit for Aguinaldo's capture, and is rewarded with a position as Brigadier General in the regular army.

It may be, however, that the character of the reports from the commanding officers had something to do with the administration's attitude. Although Sampson was at least 10 miles away when the battle was raging he wired to Washington: "The fleet under my command offers the nation as a Fourth of July present the destruction of the whole of Cervera's fleet."

General McArthur cabled Washington in these words:

Splendid co-operation navy through Commander Barry, officers, men. Vicksburg indispensable to success. Funston loudly praises navy. Entire army joins in thanks sea service.

The transaction was brilliant in conception and faultless in execution. All credit must go to Funston, who, under supervision General Wheaton, organized and conducted expedition from start to finish. His reward should be signal and immediate. Agree with General Wheaton, who recommends Funston's retention Volunteers until he can be appointed Brigadier-General regulars.

There is a marked difference here in the attitude assumed by the commanding officers toward their subordinates. The two dispatches speak for themselves, and all to the great credit of McArthur.

Something Wrong.

The Literary Digest directs attention to some startling figures relating to the sweat system in Chicago, furnished by Miss Nellie M. Auton. Miss Auton recently made a study of the condition of the workers in the garment trades in that city.

In her investigations among the Italians there she found only twelve workers who were able to earn more than \$300 a year. One hundred and nineteen were earning less than \$100 a year. Forty-three were receiving actually less than one dollar a week! The writer cites two extreme cases

to show the depth of poverty and degradation to which some of these workers are reduced. In one case, a housewife button-sewer working sixty hours each week at forty cents per week (a rate of two-thirds of a cent an hour!), in fifty-two weeks of the year earned \$21. A housewife pants-finisher working sixty-six hours each week at thirty cents per week (a rate of five-elevenths of a cent an hour!) in forty-eight weeks earned \$14.

Is there not something wrong when such conditions as these can exist at a time when many people boast of prosperity?

Where Schley Stands.

In 1888 a bill was pending in congress providing for the promotion of two naval apprentices each year to the commission rank of ensign. Admiral Schley was asked for his opinion concerning this bill: In a letter addressed to the chairman of the committee having the measure under consideration, Admiral Schley said: "No harm need be apprehended from such legislation." Then the hero of Santiago Bay added:

In all other callings, except the navy, the way to the highest place is open to merit, and I ask if it is fair to that class of boys in this great republic, who, by the accident of birth, are so situated socially or politically as to be just without the opportunity or the means to reach Annapolis as the only road to official preferment?

This opinion is eminently characteristic of the great sea fighter and is in marked contrast with the opinion expressed by Admiral Sampson. It is evident that there has been no error in the popular estimate placed upon either William T. Sampson or Winfield Scott Schley.

A Monument to White.

A committee has been appointed by the people of Los Angeles to solicit subscriptions for the erection of a monument to the late Stephen M. White. While no memorial could be as enduring as Mr. White's words and works, it is eminently fitting that there should be in his home city some visible reminder of his great ability and lofty patriotism. The San Francisco Call thus commends the effort being made by the people of southern California:

Stately monuments erected to great men are something more than adornments to cities. They serve a purpose beyond that of pleasing the eye and gratifying an esthetic taste. They stand as object lessons in patriotism. They remind men of the value of a life that is not lived solely for self. They recall to strangers the deeds of the great men to whose memory they have been erected. They attest the existence in the community of a spirit that rightly appreciates patriotism and genius, and thus tend not only to the ennoblement of the community itself, but to an increase of its reputation abroad.

The memory of Senator White's illustrious life is fresh in the minds of all. Death has cleared away from him all the clouds of partisanship, and men of all parties can now perceive the full proportions of his statesmanship. No one will now question that in the United States Senate he gave to California a prestige in great debates inferior to that of no other State in the Union, nor will it be denied that his service there was devoted to noble ends and animated by a genuine patriotism.

Such being the case there is every reason to expect from the liberality of Californians a prompt response to the appeal for subscriptions to the monument fund. Where many give something it will not be necessary for any one to give much. Moreover, from the very nature of the object of the movement it is desirable that the subscriptions come from the general mass of the people and represent the popular sentiment of the State rather than that of comparatively a few men. It is in that spirit the movement for the erection of the monument has been undertaken, and the public response should be prompt, cordial and liberal.